

~~Office Memorandum~~ • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Vice Chief of Naval Operations

Op-06/jg
DATE: 1 February 1957

FROM : DCNO (Plans and Policy)

OP-002 ✓

OP-003 ✓ 2 3/4

OP-004

OP-005

OP-006

OP-007

SUBJECT: Railroad; running of

Ref: (a) Op-09 Second Memorandum Endorsement, ser 0002P09,
31 Jan 1957, subject: Guided missile sites in the
Middle East
(b) Op-06 ser 00038P06, 25 Jan 1957, same subject

1. I believe that the dim view of reference (b) expressed by the Vice Chief of Naval Operations in reference (a) is not wholly warranted, and may be due to some misunderstanding of the intent of reference (b). Without any desire to initiate an exchange of memoranda which could last all winter, I am nevertheless impelled to submit this one in order to set the record straight.

2. It is not the intent of my memorandum to recommend that the sea-borne IRBM capability be superimposed on the SAC capability, but that it supplant it in substantial measure. The whole idea is to free this retaliatory capability from fixed shore bases in the United States and in Allied territory, thereby removing a major threat to our allies and to the continental United States resulting from the mere presence of SAC bases and missile bases in these locations. I am in agreement with the thought implicit in paragraph 2 of reference (a) that the retaliatory capability of the United States, expressed in weight of bombs, is more than adequate now.

3. I am still of the opinion that if we had a substantial number of IRBM submarines deployed as a matter of routine around the Eurasian periphery, we would have a retaliatory capability which would be difficult if not impossible for the Soviets to neutralize--certainly more difficult to neutralize than our existing capability which relies upon fixed bases at locations which we must presume are known to the enemy.

4. This is not a matter of "casting envious eyes on the SAC side of the fence". The Navy does not need the IRBM; the IRBM needs the Navy. When this capability materializes, I think the United States would be better advised to channel funds and manpower in this direction rather than to more B-52s, more airfields, more tankers, and more overseas bases in somebody else's front yard, thereby increasing the number of No. 1 priority Soviet targets in the United States and Allied territory.

Copy to:
Op-61

Whitty
R. E. L. W. H. T. Y.

Deputy Chief of Naval Operations

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Op-09/fek
Ser 0002P09
31 Jan 1957

SECOND MEMORANDUM ENDORSEMENT on Op-611 ser 00016P61, 18 Jan 57

From: Vice Chief of Naval Operations
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Guided missile sites in the Middle East

1. Forwarded, noting the thought in the First Endorsement to the basic memorandum that we must muster quickly a massive ship-based retaliatory capability. (See the underlining in paragraph 2.c.) My comments are three-fold:

a. First, our retaliatory capability is already pretty massive although relatively small in comparison with that of the Air Force; second, we are actively increasing our capability; and third, we have some important knitting of our own to do without casting envious eyes on the SAC side of the fence.

2. Each time the subject of increasing United States nuclear striking power comes up, I suggest that we hold a meeting with the fine people who are full of ideas so that we will run our railroad without suffering casualties due to switches being thrown by mistake.

H. D. FELT

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Op-06, 61

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Op-06/jg
Ser: 00038P06

JAN 25 1957

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on Op-611 Serial 00016P61, 18 Jan 1957

From: DCNO (Plans and Policy)
To: Chief of Naval Operations
Via: Vice Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: Guided missile sites in the Middle East

1. Forwarded, concurring in the underlying idea of the usefulness of IREM sites in the areas indicated, and in the idea that it would be well to explore the political obstacles in the way of their establishment with a view toward removing these obstacles if the ultimate decision is to put IREM installations in the Middle East countries.

2. I think Op-61 underestimates the danger to the countries concerned which would accrue from Soviet knowledge that these sites had been established. In this connection, I have asked Op-60 to prepare a memorandum for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the gist of which is as follows:

a. The primary target of SAC in their retaliatory effort is the Soviet capability to attack us with atomic weapons; this target includes every known major airfield and all known atomic facilities in the USSR and their satellites. It can be assumed that the Soviet effort will be directed, at least in part, against similar facilities of our own world-wide.

b. The damage and casualties to each country accruing from the atomic exchange designed primarily to eliminate each other's atomic capability is all out of proportion to the purely military objective; and it is generally acknowledged that effective defense against this attack is not possible.

c. It follows that the best defense is to remove our atomic retaliatory capability from fixed bases either in the United States or elsewhere and put it afloat. The sooner we can muster a massive ship-based retaliatory capability, the sooner we can remove attractive military targets from our own country and by so doing eliminate the military necessity which the Soviets will feel to attack the continental United States to the extent which they undoubtedly would do in the event of global war.

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Ser: 00038P06

3. The foregoing is only a rough cut at what will be in the paper, but I recommend that we adopt and push this general concept as hard as we can, and that our proposals regarding location of IRBM and ICBM sites overseas be consistent with this idea.

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R. E. LIBBY
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Plans and Policy)

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